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**Influencing Friends and Allies:
Information Operations Doctrine and the Role of the Combatant
Commander**

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature:_____

10 May 2007

Abstract

Joint Publication (JP) 3-13 states that “Information operations (IO) are described as the integrated employment of electronic warfare (EW), computer network operations (CNO), psychological operations (PSYOP), military deception (MILDEC), and operations security (OPSEC), in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp *adversarial* [emphasis added] human and automated decision making while protecting our own.” While this definition addresses the full measure of joint efforts in effecting the mind of the enemy decision maker, it cordons off other potential recipients of IO – friends and allies of the United States. The term *adversarial* in the JP 3-13 definition of IO is limiting; IO has beneficial application in US efforts to influence states and peoples friendly or allied with the United States. Certainly, some aspects of IO are best reserved for unfriendly target audiences – namely actions to disrupt, corrupt, and usurp. But if IO represents a panoply of capabilities that can be used to affect the enemy it also includes capabilities that can be used to influence friends. Therefore joint IO doctrine should be changed to include friends and allies of the United States as targeted audiences (IO-F/A). Furthermore the geographic COCOM has a role to play in IO focused on decision makers friendly to the United States – through Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, the Theater Security Cooperation Plan, and Strategic Communications. This paper examines the COCOM’s vital role in IO-F/A and justifies the need for JP 3-13 to be changed to reflect the importance of that role and information operations vis-à-vis friends and allies of the United States.

MOGADISHU, SOMALIA (CNN) – *A resurgent Islamic Courts Union (ICU) has conducted a series of attacks in both Mogadishu and Kismayo in an attempt to disrupt the Somali Transitional Government. However the ICU attacks were largely unsuccessful due to the ability of Somali government forces to effectively respond. Most importantly, the civilian inhabitants of Mogadishu and Kismayo have reacted very strongly in opposition to the ICU, supporting instead the Somali government in its efforts to bring lasting peace to the troubled state. It seems that Somalia is no longer the fertile ground for Radical Islamist support that it used to be.*

MAY 2010 – Reading this news report, the Commander of US African Command (AFRICOM) knew that his combatant command's efforts in influencing the hearts and minds of the Somali people was having a positive effect – in the geographic region as well as in the greater Long War¹. Somalia has been through quite a journey since the ICU forces were defeated over three years ago in the Battle of Ras Kamboni. The UN supported Transition Government has worked to stabilize the state and has steadily progressed toward the country's first general election in a generation. Of key interest to the combatant command (COCOM) was the willingness of the Somali people to support the government over the ICU. The ICU's inability to garner popular support in its fight against the Transitional Government was the successful outgrowth of a concerted Information Operations (IO) campaign conducted by his J39 team.

In 2007 AFRICOM had responded to the crisis brought on by torrential rains and flooding, by establishing a humanitarian assistance coordination center (HACC) in the port of Kismayo and coordinating an interagency and international effort to deliver foreign humanitarian assistance – providing water, food, and temporary shelter to the Somalis affected by the floods. The after-action report from the humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operation

¹ While understanding that the new commander of CENTCOM, ADM Fallon, has stated displeasure at the use of this name to describe the current conflict, nonetheless "Long War" and the "Global War on Terrorism" will be used interchangeably in this paper.

revealed that the port of Kismayo was woefully inadequate to support such an operation. Fifteen years of conflict and neglect had rendered this important Somali port ineffective. In 2008 AFRICOM initiated a civil-military operation that helped Somalia rebuild the port facilities. Following this, the IO team recognized that the good news story about the port needed to be told to all Somalis as evidence of the growing stability and strength of the Transitional Government. AFRICOM began an information effort to provide the Somali people accurate news on how the Transitional Government was providing for their security (thanks to military training with US forces), building the economy to address their needs, and establishing the central government in preparation for a general election. By 2009, when the ICU attempted to regain the initiative, the ICU was unable to enlist (or co-opt) the people in support of their efforts. The commander of AFRICOM smiled...looks like the Somalis are supporting their government over the Islamists. Maybe they would be willing to support the United States over Radical Islamists in the Long War.

The above story is fiction – but it reveals a dichotomy between the potential application of information operations by the combatant commander and current IO joint doctrine. Joint Publication (JP) 3-13 states that “Information operations (IO) are described as the integrated employment of electronic warfare (EW), computer network operations (CNO), psychological operations (PSYOP), military deception (MILDEC), and operations security (OPSEC), in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp *adversarial* [emphasis added] human and automated decision making while protecting our own.”² While this definition addresses the full measure of joint efforts in effecting the mind of the enemy decision maker, it cordons off other potential recipients of IO – friends and allies of the United States. The term *adversarial* in the JP 3-13 definition of IO is

² Joint Publication 3-13, *Information Operations*, 13 FEB 2006, p. ix.

limiting; IO has beneficial application in US efforts to influence states and peoples friendly or allied with the United States. Certainly, some aspects of IO are best reserved for unfriendly target audiences – namely actions to disrupt, corrupt, and usurp. But if IO represents a panoply of capabilities that can be used to affect the enemy it also includes capabilities that can be used to influence friends. Therefore joint IO doctrine should be changed to include friends and allies of the United States as targeted audiences. Furthermore the geographic COCOM has a role to play in IO focused on decision makers friendly to the United States. Indeed, the Somalia vignette provides an outline for exploring the COCOM’s role in conducting Information Operations-Friends & Allies (IO-F/A). Yet before delving into an examination of these roles, an analysis of current joint doctrine regarding IO (and its supporting and related capabilities) is useful.

Current Joint Doctrine – A rose by any other name...

Two questions are at the forefront of our analysis of joint doctrine regarding Information Operations: Is current IO doctrine useful vis-à-vis friends and allies and if so how? Interestingly enough, JP 3-13 possesses the concepts and capabilities that support IO efforts focused on friends and allies of the United States.

JP 3-13 provides the joint force commander (and staff) the guidance needed to plan and execute information operations with the goal of achieving and maintaining information superiority.³ The desired dominance is over the information environment – the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information.⁴ JP 3-13 identifies three dimensions of the information environment – physical,

³ Joint Publication 3-13, p. ix.

⁴ Ibid, p. 1-1.

informational, and cognitive. Furthermore, JP 3-13 states that the cognitive dimension is the most important of the three for in it resides the mind of the decision maker.⁵ Finally, JP 3-13 recognizes that IO can produce effects and achieve objectives across the range of military operations with the ultimate objective of securing US national interests in the information environment.⁶

Fortunately, as currently written, JP 3-13 provides the guidance necessary for conducting IO towards friends and allies (IO-F/A). JP 3-13 identifies specific capabilities – core, supporting, and related – to be used in the three dimensions of the information environment. Adversaries merit application of all these capabilities, but friends and allies are not enemies and thus should not be the recipient of IO capabilities that destroy, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp their information environment. This eliminates the physical and informational dimensions for application in IO-F/A, but the cognitive dimension provides a working space for IO efforts to influence friendly decision makers.

JP 3-13 identifies five core capabilities of IO – psychological operations, military deception, operations security, electronic warfare, and computer network operations. Since PSYOP is relevant in the cognitive dimension of the information environment, this core capability is useful in conducting IO-F/A. JP 3-13 then identifies five supporting capabilities that contribute to effective IO – information assurance, physical security, physical attack, counterintelligence, and combat camera (COMCAM). COMCAM objectives are to document and inform and thus provide a useful marketing tool in conducting IO-F/A. Finally, JP 3-13 presents three related capabilities that make significant contributions to IO if coordinated and integrated with core and supporting IO capabilities. These related

⁵ Ibid, p. 1-2.

⁶ Ibid, p. 1-8.

capabilities are public affairs (PA), civil-military operations (CMO), and defense support to public diplomacy (DSPD). In the context of IO directed at adversarial decision making, these related capabilities require application that is sensitive to their primary purpose which is generally not in direct action against the enemy. But for precisely that reason PA, CMO, and DSPD are very useful tools in conducting IO-F/A where the ability to positively influence an audience can be directly translated into freedom of maneuver in the information environment.

Thus current joint doctrine is useful in conducting IO-F/A and it identifies the tools for doing so. Yet throughout JP 3-13 the motif is that the focus of IO planning and execution is on adversaries of the United States. But, as we have seen throughout the Global War on Terror (GWOT) the decisions and actions of our friends and allies have not always been supportive of US national interests – whether those decisions have been regionally focused (such as Turkey’s decision not to allow US ground forces to invade Iraq from inside her territory) or globally focused (such as France and Germany’s resistance to US initiatives regarding Iraq on the UN Security Council). Turkey, France, and Germany are all long time friends and allies of the United States, and the decisions of their leaders impacted the means with which the United States pursued major operations in the GWOT. Granted, the above examples are more relevant to the national-strategic level and thus would involve the US Department of State more than the affected COCOM. But US Central Command *was* affected (at the operational level) by the decisions of these friends and allies. Thus if the ultimate objective of IO according to joint doctrine is to secure US national interests (in the information environment...or simply in the mind of the decision maker), then should not the executor of joint IO – the geographic COCOM – be able to apply IO (at the operational level)

towards affecting the minds of those decision makers who can impact US national interests? By examining the geographic combatant commander's role in conducting IO-F/A – through Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR), the Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP), and Strategic Communications (STRAT COMM) – this question can be answered.

The Geographic Combatant Commander's Role in IO-F/A

The COCOM's role in IO-F/A depends on the integration and coordination of the core, supporting, and related IO capabilities identified above – specifically psychological operations, combat camera, public affairs, civil-military operations, and defense support to public diplomacy. PSYOP pervades IO-F/A because at its heart are actions designed to influence the behavior of the targeted audience.⁷ Combat Camera provides the COCOM with the capability to record and document, via visual media, information valuable to the operational commander and pertinent to national objectives – information that can then be transmitted to the desired targeted audience.⁸ The COCOM utilizes public affairs activities to maintain the trust and confidence of the US friends and allies as well as to counter adversary propaganda. By providing truthful, pertinent, and timely information to the targeted audience, public affairs contributes to effective IO-F/A.⁹

By encompassing all the activities that joint force commanders engage in to establish, maintain, and influence positive relations between their own forces, civil authorities, and the general population in friendly or neutral areas, civil-military operations represent a robust

⁷ Joint Publication 3-53, *Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations*, 5 SEP 2003, p. 1-1.

⁸ Air, Land, Sea Application Center, *Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Joint Combat Camera Operations*, March 2003, pp. 1-1 – 1-2.

⁹ Joint Publication 3-61, *Public Affairs*, 9 MAY 2005, pp. 1-2 – 1-3.

tool kit for conducting IO-F/A.¹⁰ CMO activities such as foreign humanitarian assistance (FHA), military civic action, and domestic support operations provide the COCOM with effective means for shaping the battlespace – which in the context of IO-F/A equates to the minds of friendly decision makers. Furthermore, CMO provides a conduit for interagency coordination as well as connection with non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations – professional relationships that positively contribute to the COCOM’s ability to influence friends and allies. The most important linkage to connect in IO-F/A is between the COCOM’s activities and the public diplomacy efforts of the United States government (USG). Defense support for public diplomacy represents the alignment of the COCOM’s efforts and the national-strategic goals of the USG – an alignment that at its core matches strategy to policy.¹¹

Now armed with a deeper understanding of the specific core, supporting, and related capabilities that energize IO-F/A let us examine the COCOM’s role in conducting IO-F/A through HA/DR actions, TSCP endeavors, and STRAT COMM.

The Influence of Good Deeds

The deadly December 2004 tsunami that ravaged Southeast Asia resulted in the largest international humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operation in history.¹² At the forefront of this massive HA/DR effort was US Pacific Command (PACOM) – the combatant command responsible for the affected region. PACOM’s efforts have been

¹⁰ Joint Publication 3-57, *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations*, 8 FEB 2001, p. 1-1.

¹¹ Joint Publication 3-13, p. 2-10.

¹² Dewey G. Jordan. “Operation UNIFIED ASSISTANCE”, *Marine Corps Gazette*, (Quantico: May 2006, Vol. 90, Iss. 5), p. 57.

thoroughly documented and our purpose here is not to recount them, but rather to examine this HA/DR effort (and others) through the perspective of IO-F/A.

Operation Unified Assistance (OUA) provided PACOM with the opportunity to use its vast resources of “hard power” to create “soft power” effects.¹³ PACOM ordered USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN Carrier Strike Group and USS BONHOMME RICHARD Expeditionary Strike Group to the area of operations (AOR) the day after the tsunamis hit and they were on station shortly thereafter delivering much needed water, food, and medical supplies. Soon afterwards, the hospital ship USNS MERCY arrived to continue the urgent medical care needed in the affected region.¹⁴ Conducting HA/DR in support of a USG lead agency is not new to the US military or to COCOMs in general. The CMO tools used by PACOM – FHA, HACC, and civil-military operations center (CMOC) – are already detailed in joint doctrine. But in the context of information operations, OUA enabled PACOM to use its forces to influence our friends in the region. In his study of the US Navy’s efforts in OUA, Bruce Elleman noted that the operation, “dramatically improved U.S.-Indonesian government-to-government and military-to-military relations, and so furthered the goals of the global war on terror and of regional cooperation.”¹⁵ The last point from Elleman is key – the impact on future operations in the GWOT. PACOM’s humanitarian assistance efforts in Operation Unified Assistance positively influenced the opinions of regional governments and people vis-à-vis the United States, thereby paving the way for better cooperation in the future. Commenting on the impact of OUA, Secretary of the Navy Winter stated that, “We

¹³ Bruce A. Elleman. *Waves of Hope: The US Navy’s Response to the Tsunami in Northern Indonesia*, (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, FEB 07), p. 104.

¹⁴ US Pacific Command, *Operation Unified Assistance*, Operation overview Powerpoint, accessed 23 APR 2007 from PACOM Tsunami archive at <http://131.84.1.218/special/0412asia/>

¹⁵ Elleman, p. 101.

have seen significantly positive impacts in Indonesia, Pakistan and the Horn of Africa as a direct result of our and other nations' humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.”¹⁶

SECNAV Winters' above comment also reflected the HA/DR experience of US Central Command (CENTCOM) in the devastating October 2005 earthquake that struck Pakistan. Much as PACOM responded to the Southeast Asian Tsunami, so did CENTCOM quickly respond to this destructive earthquake.¹⁷ As part of Operation Lifeline, CENTCOM utilized forces that were in theater supporting Operation Enduring Freedom to conduct HA/DR missions. Medical supplies, water, foodstuffs, and building materials were all delivered to the hard hit areas via the logistic support provided by CENTCOM.¹⁸ Again, details of the relief effort have been documented elsewhere – what is important is this HA/DR effort in the IO-F/A context. If IO-F/A is about influencing friends and allies, then the HA/DR effort should be part of a relationship with the targeted audience – in this case our ally Pakistan. And indeed that is what CENTCOM did: build on the success of Operation Lifeline with Operation Promise Keeping – a follow up mission to deliver aid to the people of Pakistan still recovering from the earthquake one year later. Operation Promise Keeping again utilized CENTCOM's assets to provide building materials and construction teams to areas in northern Pakistan still in need.¹⁹ Commenting on their mission to provide relief and to show the Pakistani people that America is their ally and friend, a CH-46 pilot stated that “Pakistan is one of the most important partners in the global war on terrorism, especially in Operation Enduring Freedom. [The] Taliban and other fighters are all over the mountains on the border

¹⁶ Elleman, p. 103. Elleman also cites the Pew Research Center poll that showed a 39% favorable increase in how the Indonesian people view the United States as a result of OUA.

¹⁷ US CENTCOM. “US Prepares for Operation to Aid Pakistan”, CENTCOM Press Release, OCT 2006, accessed 24 APR 2007 from CENTCOM news archive at <http://www.centcom.mil/sites/uscentcom2/Lists/Current%20Press%20Releases/DispForm.aspx?ID=3750>

¹⁸ Robert Dodson and George McKemmy, “NOLSC Supports Pakistan Earthquake Relief Efforts in CENTCOM”, *US Navy Supply Corps Newsletter*, (Washington DC: MAR/APR 2006, Vol. 69, Iss. 2), pp. 11-12

¹⁹ US CENTCOM. “US Prepares for Operation to Aid Pakistan”

between Afghanistan and Pakistan. When the Pakistanis see that America is an ally and we help them when they're in need, then the Taliban has no place to go. You sure don't see the Taliban helping people in northern Pakistan.”²⁰

Operation Unified Assistance and Operation Lifeline represent successful COCOM HA/DR actions – with IO-F/A benefits. But a COCOM does not require a natural disaster in order to use CMO and FHA activities. In June 2007, the hospital ship USNS COMFORT will deploy on a goodwill mission to Latin America and the Caribbean – a mission planned and coordinated by US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM).²¹ By providing medical care to the people of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Panama, Peru, Columbia, and eight other countries, the USNS COMFORT humanitarian assistance mission will spread the benevolence of the United States into the region – signaling as did PACOM's tsunami relief and CENTCOM's earthquake assistance, that the United States is their friend and ally.

The purpose of looking at the HA/DR efforts of PACOM, CENTCOM, and SOUTHCOM is not simply to present examples of COCOM success in delivering FHA. Look at these operations from the perspective of the IO Cell in each of these COCOMs. In the context of IO-F/A, these HA/DR actions provide excellent opportunities to positively influence the minds of US friends and allies (government and peoples alike). Moreover, with IO-F/A as a stated part of joint IO doctrine, the COCOM J39 shop would incorporate the appropriate core, supporting, and related IO capabilities in its planning for these HA/DR missions in order to achieve the best IO-F/A effects. An accompanying PSYOP effort to get the word out about American HA/DR actions; the COCOM PA team countering any negative press; effective COMCAM footage to back the PA piece up; and IO-F/A DSPD planning would

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Gerry J. Gilmore. “Bush Dispatches USNS Comfort on Goodwill Mission”, *American Forces Press Service*, accessed on 30 MAR 2007 at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=3276>

work to ensure that the COCOM's actions were aligned with USG national policy and strategic objectives.

Building the Neighborhood

One of the primary means COCOMs support USG policy and objectives is via their Theater Security Cooperation Plans. These activities encompass FHA missions such as those noted above, military-to-military training programs, and regional military exercises. SOUTHCOM again provides rich examples of how COCOM TSCPs can be utilized in the context of IO-F/A.

The aforementioned USNS COMFORT deployment could stand alone on the merits of its FHA mission, but it is synchronized with other regional missions as part of SOUTHCOM's TSCP. Shortly before COMFORT deploys this summer, SOUTHCOM will be sending a specially configured ship on a seven-month deployment to engage regional allies with training and maintenance events designed to help our partner states in Latin America better secure their ports and coastal waters.²² USS SWIFT's deployment to the SOUTHCOM AOR is part of the Navy's Global Fleet Station initiative in which a single US Navy ship is sent to an area of interest to act as a base of operations for security patrols, construction assistance, and other outreach missions.²³ Indeed, military-to-military activities such as this have enabled SOUTHCOM to build and maintain positive relationships throughout the region.²⁴

²² ADM James Stavridis, Commander US SOUTHCOM. "Build a true partnership with Latin America", *The Miami Herald*, 8 MAR 2007 edition, accessed on 24 APR 2007 at <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/news.php?storyId=159>

²³ Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW) Cynthia Clark, "Global Fleet Station Pilot One Step Closer with Arrival of Swift", US Dept of Defense Information, 9 APR 2007, accessed on 24 APR 2007 at <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1252263601&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=18762&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

²⁴ GEN Bantz J. Craddock, Commander US SOUTHCOM. Statement to the House Armed Services Committee, 16 MAR 2006, p. 2.

In addition to the activities of USNS COMFORT and USS SWIFT, the SOUTHCOM AOR is further engaged by the sequencing of SOUTHCOM's annual New Horizons exercises. New Horizons 2007 has US engineer, medical, and combat service support units conducting humanitarian and civic assistance missions to provide much needed services and infrastructure to rural, underprivileged areas in South and Central America.²⁵ These joint and combined exercises enable US forces to work with regional military and civilian organizations – and equally important, to interact with local people as they build schools and clinics, and fix roads.²⁶

Fixing roads may seem bland in comparison to building schools or clinics, but it actually presents a different approach to what COCOM civil affairs (CA) teams have generally done in the past. While schools and clinics have their purpose (and are attractive endeavors for FHA), building and repairing infrastructure holds the possibility of gaining greater influence vis-à-vis a targeted audience. As commander of Operation Task Unit Manda Bay Kenya, LCDR Tristan Rizzi worked with the Kenyan government in efforts to improve their maritime security capabilities. While in Kenya, Rizzi observed that the port facilities in Manda Bay needed repair and were unable to meet the needs of the local people (who used it to transport food and water – especially when the dirt roads were washed out during the monsoon season). A new school may be nice for future generations in Manda Bay, but a COCOM supported CMO that worked with the Kenyans to fix the piers would have a more immediate impact – on the Kenyan's ability to use Manda Bay and on their attitude toward the United States. Furthermore, CMO that focuses on simple infrastructure like roads provides a greater benefit to the targeted audience as a whole. A school benefits the kids. A

²⁵ SOUTHCOM, "NEWSFILE: New Horizons 2007" posted 15 MAR 2007, accessed on 24 APR 2007 at <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/news.php?storyId=267>

²⁶ Ibid.

clinic helps the sick. A road helps everyone. “We’re using our CA teams for what *we* think they need,” stated Rizzi, “Instead we need to help them build the stuff *they* really need.”

Moreover, LCDR Rizzi witnessed the potential benefits that such infrastructure-focused CMO could produce. The Chinese government built a 60-mile paved road from Mombassa to Nairobi. Rizzi believed that the road went by an oil refinery that the Chinese used, but that was not the important thing to the Kenyans. They just were happy to have the new road – and they talked openly and positively about the Chinese who built it for them.²⁷

Strategic Communications at the Operational Level

In “Terrorism as a Psychological Strategy”, Maurice Tugwell argues that in order to successfully conduct a military campaign, the warring state must meet three psychological criteria – convictions the author termed the Mobilizing Trinity:

1. A belief in something good to be promoted or defended;
2. A belief in something evil to be destroyed or resisted;
3. A belief in the ultimate victory of the good cause.²⁸

Coupling these convictions in terms of the Long War and the role of the combatant commander is useful. The COCOM’s IO-F/A efforts in conducting HA/DR missions and in building regional relationships through the TSCP, should contribute to their belief in the good of America – our institutions, our support for human rights, and our fight for freedom. The other two legs of the Mobilizing Trinity can also be addressed via IO-F/A by conducting information operations that illuminate the enemy for what he is and that tell the good news stories about our successes.

²⁷ Information based on interview with LCDR Tristan Rizzi (Navy Special Warfare – SEAL). LCDR Rizzi served as the Commanding Officer of Operation Task Unit Manda Bay Kenya in 2004. In 2005 he returned to Kenya during his tour in the J3 at Special Operations Command CENTCOM (SOCCENT).

²⁸ Maurice Tugwell. “Terrorism as a Psychological Strategy”, *Psychological Operations and Warfare in Long-term Strategic Planning*, (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1990), p. 70.

In order for IO-F/A to be effective in this regard, the COCOM's actions must be aligned with an effective national-strategic narrative for fighting the Long War. But in order for this to happen there has to be a US national communications strategy – something that has eluded the USG since the end of the Cold War.²⁹ This brings up an issue that is beyond the scope of this work, but suffice it to say the United States has demonstrated the ability to have a very effective strategic narrative for confronting the enemy at hand.³⁰ President Ronald Reagan's strategic communication plan provided an effective national-strategic narrative from which to fight the Cold War against the Soviet Union and communism. Reagan succeeded in demonizing the USSR, calling it the Evil Empire and framing the Soviets as the bad guys. His communication strategy ensured that the American people – and our friends and allies across the globe – knew that the Soviet Union was the enemy and that the forces of communism must be opposed.

Moving forward to the 21st century's Long War against Radical Islamists and down to the operational level of war, strategic communication plays a vital part in the COCOM's role in conducting IO-F/A. If HA/DR and TSCP efforts communicate to regional friends and allies that the United States is the good guy, then STRAT COMM – utilizing the capabilities of PSYOP and COMCAM – can communicate that the Radical Islamists are the bad guys...and that they are worth fighting against. CENTCOM can use its COMCAM teams to document the nihilistic violence of the insurgents. This is already being done by the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior – showing videos of captured insurgents being confronted by grieving and angry

²⁹ Jeffrey B. Jones. "Strategic Communication: A Mandate for the United States", *Joint Forces Quarterly*, (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, Iss. 39, 4th Quarter 2005), p. 108.

³⁰ Indeed, the 2006 QDR Execution Roadmap for Strategic Communication identified DOD challenges in conducting strategic communications and recommended actions to remedy this gap in capability.

mothers who lost children to the death wrought by the insurgent's hands.³¹ By providing true information (and images) about the enemy, the COCOM can influence friends and allies by publicizing the enemy's evil nature.

Additionally, the COCOM can utilize those same IO capabilities – PSYOP, COMCAM, and PA – to provide accurate information on our operational and tactical successes. This piece is critical in maintaining the support of friends and allies in the Long War by providing evidence of progress towards ultimate victory. Just as the COCOM can document the evils of al Qaeda, so can the COCOM document our triumphs – and then clearly communicate them to the media (and our friends) via effective public affairs engagement.

So what...and can the COCOM even do IO-F/A?

Thus far in this examination of IO-F/A and the COCOM's role, numerous acronyms have been used in building the argument. Here is one for the counter argument: MOTO – Master of the Obvious. Outlining the COCOM's role in IO-F/A has mostly identified actions, plans, and programs that regional combatant commands are already doing – and will continue to do. Changing joint IO doctrine to include friends and allies as targeted audiences will not establish HA/DR as a COCOM mission or call for the development of a TSCP. Moreover, the core, supporting, and related capabilities used to conduct IO-F/A are already established in current joint doctrine.

Beyond the substantive argument that current IO doctrine is sufficient is the interagency argument that the military – and the regional combatant commands specifically – should not be engaging in information operations designed to influence friends and allies. Influencing

³¹ Ed O'Connell and Dr. Cheryl Benard. "A New IO Strategy: Prevention and Disengagement", *Strategic Insights*, (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School Press, May 2006)

friends and allies has generally been the purview of the Department of State (DOS). The US Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (otherwise known as the Smith-Mundt Act) established the Cold War institutions that directed US global communications and propaganda at the USSR and other communist antagonists. The primary institution established was the US Information Agency (USIA) whose mission was to inform and influence foreign audiences in an effort to promote US national interests. In 1999, USIA was disestablished and its mission subsumed by DOS's Public Affairs office.³² Thus, in essence, IO-F/A is a DOS mission.

Yet recognizing the growing importance of information operations in the techno-revolution of the 21st century, the Department of Defense (DOD) has wrestled with how it should conduct IO. In the 2003 Information Operations Roadmap, DOD called for the establishment of IO as a core military competency, acknowledged the legal limitations of PSYOP and the Smith-Mundt Act, but did not provide any actual limits as long as DOD forces do not target the American public.³³ This last point – in revealing an inherent ambiguity in the IO Roadmap – leaves the door open for the military to conduct IO-F/A.

And if the door is open, who is most able to walk through it? Beyond having a budget that dwarfs the DOS, DOD – and the regional COCOM specifically – has the capabilities to effectively conduct IO-F/A. The Somalia vignette is again useful; it succinctly shows the cumulative effects of COCOM actions in HA/DR, TSCP, and STRAT COMM. Furthermore, as we have seen, the COCOM has been successful in influencing friends and allies through

³² Allen Palmer and Edward Carter. *The Smith-Mundt Act's Ban on Domestic Propaganda: An Analysis of the Cold War Statute Limiting Access to Public Diplomacy*, (Brigham Young University: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., Winter 2006), accessed at <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe>

³³ Kristin Adair and Thomas Blanton. "Rumsfeld's Roadmap to Propaganda", *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 177*, (George Washington University: Posted 26 JAN 2006), accessed at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB177/index.htm>

real world actions such as tsunami relief in Southeast Asia and New Horizons engagement in Latin America.

Language is Important

Which brings us back to the question of why should current IO doctrine be changed if the COCOM is already able to do IO-F/A? Because language matters. Language provides the knowledge, the guidance, and the lexicon necessary for understanding and conducting joint operations. And the specific language in joint doctrine drives planning and impacts execution. If joint IO doctrine was not limited by the term *adversarial*, then the COCOM J39 would be able to build IO plans that could focus on all potential audiences – friends and foes – as part of the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Environment (JIPOE) that would enable the JTF commander to accomplish the mission. Furthermore, with friends and allies as recognized audiences for IO, the staff J39 can plan IO-F/A activities that shape the battlefield (in Phase 0) as part of the deliberate planning process for contingency operations. Therefore, current joint IO doctrine – JP 3-13 – should be changed to include friends and allies as targeted audiences.

This conclusion does not result in DOD supplanting DOS in national-strategic efforts to influence the thoughts and behaviors foreign audiences. To the contrary, this conclusion points to greater interagency coordination, particularly at the operational level where the COCOM CA and PA teams can partner with embassy country teams (and USAID) to promote US national policy and strategic objectives. Furthermore, IO-F/A is not simply a game of semantics – it recognizes a real and important audience *and* the effective means to address it. Thus it acknowledges the combatant commander's vital role.

Understanding this, JP 3-13 should be changed to include IO-F/A as part of doctrine. If political sensitivities are still at play, then a SECRET/NOFORN supplement to JP 3-13 can be developed to mitigate them. Additionally, as the primary agents for conducting IO-F/A, the regional COCOMs should be empowered to do so; particularly with funding lines to support greater TSCP engagement activities that support IO-F/A objectives.

Information Operations-Friends & Allies is not about lying to our friends. Nor is it akin to the propaganda efforts of Joseph Goebbels. IO-F/A is simply a recognition of the important fact that what our friends think about us and our intentions impacts our ability to operate across the full spectrum of the DIME. IO-F/A empowers – through language and leverage – the regional combatant commanders to do good and truthful actions that positively influence the minds of friendly decision makers – decision makers who we must work with in order to win the Long War.

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